

CITY OF GAITHERSBURG
Celebrate Gaithersburg in Olde Towne Street Festival Ad Hoc Committee
January 25, 2011

Attendees:, Marilyn Balcombe, Shaun Curtis, Robert Fischer, Adam Greenberg, Marjorie Lane, Paul Poto, Tom Rowse, Kenneth Weiss, Janet Limmer, Cho Ortega, Elizabeth Poole, Nansie Wilde

Absent: Chuck Blessings, Jr., Fares Hassen, Yvette Monroe, Paula Ross

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m.

I. TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:

Festival Size

It was suggested that the geographic boundaries of the event might be tightened up to create a more dynamic feel to the event. Committee members will consider the map and the festival and make specific suggestions at next meeting.

Bike/Car Show

Fares Hassen may have contact for "Bike Show" if we want to add this to event. Discussion was that it is a good draw, but needs to be visible. Car owners in the past have requested a parking lot instead of being along the street to protect their vehicles. This may apply to "bikes" too.

Main Stage Entertainment

The committee seems to be very interested in replacing a headliner band with a local talent competition. The hottest shows on TV are the American Idol, real life talent shows. It was suggested that we add a charitable aspect with VHI-Save the Music (keeping music in schools) and use their platform for advertising. Using social networking could "go viral." Maybe have streaming video at event with a paypal link for voting and donations – families and friends all over the world could be part of Celebrate Gaithersburg. Charge to participate, have celebrity judges, prizes might include studio recording time or choreography services. Would need a webpage "Gaithersburg Talent Search" (or something to that effect) linked to City page. Maybe consider a separate award for school groups by grade to encourage local school participation. Possible prize might be money to school for music programming. Possibility that first round of competition and/or auditions could be part of summer City Hall stage events. Maybe we can promote the "Let's Move City" initiative with the dance competition. Paul Poto will do some research and present possible program ideas at next meeting.

Food

The committee is in favor of trying to get restaurants to participate in a non-traditional "Taste." No tickets, no profit sharing, basically a restaurant court. The festival should try to provide (within budget) whatever it can to make it easier for restaurants such as tents, tables, hand washing stations, three compartment sinks, and electricity. Restaurant owners on committee will need to educate other restaurants on how to choose their menu items and price to try to reach a break-even point; and the value of participating in a new customer base. May be able to get restaurants to participate by offering to buy gift certificates (at 50 cents on the dollar) to give to talent competition winners and be able to build PR for both the talent competition and the "Taste." Possibly can get a media partner (Washington Parent?) to also promote. Adam Greenberg, Robert Fischer, and Cho Ortega met briefly after the close of the meeting to discuss how to contact previous "Taste" participants and will report at next meeting.

Theme

The committee is working toward a "local" theme with local restaurants, local talent, local schools, and local celebrity judges. Would rather put the money back into the community instead of paying for a headliner and feels that the talent competition could draw as large of crowd (with families and friends of performers) as would the headliner.

Reminders:

Next meeting will be Tuesday, February 8, 2011 at 8 a.m. Activity Center.

II. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Nansie Wilde